# RAJYA SABHA

*Tuesday, the 24th August, 1993/*
*2nd Bhadra, 1915 (Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the clock, **The Deputy Chairman** in the chair.

## MEMBER SWORN

SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURY (West Bengal)

---

## ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

### STD/ISD Working in the Country

*381. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of STD/ISD working in the country State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are not considering to increase these facilities in view of the rising demand; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The required information is furnished in the enclosed statement. [*see below*]

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to part (b) above.

**Statement**

*Status of STD PCOs as on* 31-3-93

| Sl. No. | Circle | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 2957 |
| 2. | Assam | 405 |
| 3. | Bihar | 551 |
| 4. | Gujarat | 4814 |
| 5. | Jammu & Kashmir | 83 |
| 6. | Kerala | 3100 |
| 7. | Karnataka | 2954 |
| 8. | Madhya Pradesh | 2600 |
| 9. | Maharashtra | 3958 |
| 10. | Orissa | 594 |
| 11. | Haryana | 950 |
| 12. | Himachal Pradesh | 130 |
| 13. | Punjab | 2923 |
| 14. | Rajasthan | 2286 |
| 15. | North Eastern | 183 |
| 16. | Tamil Nadu | 2955 |
| 17. | Uttar Pradesh | 3437 |
| 18. | West Bengal | 84 |
| | **METRO DISTRICTS** | |
| 1. | CALCUTTA | 1181 |
| 2. | MADRAS | 1358 |
| 3. | DELHI | 1954 |
| 4. | BOMBAY | 2558 |

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Madam, communication is a very important aspect in life and a telephone is no more a luxury nowadays. Even STD and ISD booths are working very successfully in the country. But we are having only 45,000 booths for the entire country. Even though the answer of the Minister exhibits that the Government has an open mind in giving booths, unfortunately, this feeling of the Government has not percolated down to the circle officers, where a number of applications are pending at the district level and at the circle level. My own experience is that I sent an application for sanctioning an STD booth for a handicapped woman and for the last six months I am waiting but nothing has come out so far. As a matter of fact, priority should be given to handicapped people. Though the Government of India is having an open mind to increase the number of STD booths, this has not been so in the present case. Will the Minister issue a circular and also find out the number of pending applications and see to it that they are cleared immediately?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Madam, I fully subscribe to the views expressed by the hon. Member. Keeping in view this fact that deserving persons should get the STD booths early and all assistance should be provided to them, I have recently revised the STD booth policy. Keeping these twin objectives in mind, firstly, I have made it job-oriented and secondly, I have tried to give more facilities to those people who do not have telephones at their residence or who do not have the STD facilities. I have revised this policy accordingly. I agree that educated youths have to be given STD booths or pay-phones and for that purpose, there used to be one officer who used to allow pay-phones to people on the basis of their applications. But now I have made it compulsory that there has to be a committee consisting of two officers and three non-officials. I have tried my best to make it more transparent so that this Committee takes a decision for allotment of pay-phones to deserving applicants. And at the same time the locality where it has to be given has also to be decided by the Committee.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Madam, while complimenting the Minister for his efforts in making the STD/ISD booths popular and making it job-oriented, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he will keep in view reserving the allotment of these booths in favour of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and handicapped persons? By doing so, a number of people can be absorbed here and the educated youth who are wandering in the streets can be absorbed here. The Minister himself has conceived making it a job-oriented one. Will he also consider keeping a reserved quota for SC/ST applicants in the allotment of pay-phones?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Yes, Madam, I have already kept this aspect in view while revising this policy. The handicapped including blind persons, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, ex-servicemen, war widows, retired DoT employees and dependents of the freedom fighters, charitable institutions etc.—all these categories have been kept in the policy.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: At least one member should be appointed on the Selection Committee also.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: Madam, I would like to ask the Minister one thing. In the list that has been given, the status of STD and PCOs has been mentioned. What was asked was regarding STD and ISD. Will the Minister let us know what the position of ISD is in the circles which he has mentioned? Then I will come to my question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; you have put your question.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: Madam, in fact, he has not answered the question. If you see the question, it is about STD/ISD; it is not about PCO. PCO is totally different. The question has not said anything about it. There is no reply about ISD.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Madam, State-wise, for the current year I have got the

information—these local, including STD are 29,050 and STD/ISD—because this ISD is included in the STD, there is no difference between STD and ISD—are 29,050. The total comes to 58,100. This information, I think, I have given you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Maheshwar Singh.....

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: Madam, coming back to my question.....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now you asked it and he clarified it.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: No; Madam, I have asked for a clarification only.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; no clarification.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: I have not put my question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is the question.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: No, it is not a question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; I have got so many names.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR: Madam, I am just asking my question now. For four metro districts the figure has been given. I would like to know from the Minister about the four metro districts which he has given. Part (1) of my question is, whether they are included in the State circles. That is part (1). Part (2) is what the ratio is of STD and PCO booths that are given to different areas, circle-wise and sub-circle-wise. Is there any ratio for it?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Madam, these four metropolitan cities enjoy a special status; otherwise, one circle covers the entire State but here a separate circle has been given; the status of a circle has to be given to these four metropolitan cities. We have not fixed any ratio between STD pay-phones and non-STD pay-phones. It depends upon the requirement and who applies for what; whether one applies simply for pay-phone without STD facility. If one applies for STD also, we have to give that facility.

**श्री महेश्वर सिंह**: उपसभापति महोदया, जो सूचना सभा-पटल पर रखी गई है, उसके अंतर्गत 31 मार्च, 1993 तक हिमाचल प्रदेश में 130 स्थानों पर एसटीडी/आईएसडी की सुविधा प्रदान की गई है। मैं आपके माध्यम से संचार मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि इस समय हिमाचल प्रदेश में इसके अतिरिक्त कुल कितने स्थानों पर एसटीडी/आईएसडी सुविधा प्रदान करने का मामला सरकार के विचाराधीन है और इस वर्ष किस-किस स्थान को यह सुविधा प्रदान करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है? गतवर्ष कितने स्थानों पर एसटीडी सुविधा प्रदान करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया था, कितने स्थानों पर लक्ष्य-प्राप्ति हुई और किन कारणों से कुछ स्थानों पर लक्ष्य-प्राप्ति नहीं हो सकी तथा उनके नाम क्या है?

**श्री सुख राम**: मेडम, क्वेश्चन तो यह जनरल है, हिमाचल का ठीक है कि जो नम्बर इसमें एसटीडी का दिया गया है, वह 130 है। अब मेरे पास यह तो सूचना नहीं है कि कहां-कहां एसटीडी फेसिलिटी हिमाचल में नहीं है, मगर माननीय सदस्य को मालूम होगा कि हिमाचल में ...(**व्यवधान**).

**श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह**: आप दोनों ही हिमाचल के हैं। प्रश्न पूछने वाला और उत्तर देने वाला, दोनों हिमाचल के हैं।

**श्री सुख राम**: बहुत सी जगह एसटीडी फेसिलिटी दी जा रही है और हिमाचल को इस वास्ते भी प्राथमिकता है, यह नहीं है कि मैं हिमाचल से हूं इस वास्ते प्राथमिकता है, बल्कि हमने

यह नीति निर्धारित की है कि देश में जहां-जहां टूरिज्म की ज्यादा पोटेंशियल है, वहां यह टूरिज्म का बहुत इम्पोर्टेंट इन्फास्ट्रक्चर है, इस वास्ते हिमाचल को उस नज़रिए से भी प्राथमिकता है। माननीय सदस्य अगर थोड़ा मालूमात् करने की कोशिश करें तो आपको मालूम होगा कि कहां-कहां क्या हो रहा है।

**श्री महेश्वर सिंह**: मनाली में?

**श्री सुख राम**: मनाली का अभी बहुत जल्दी, पहले महीने के पहले हफ्ते में उद्घाटन हो रहा है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This qusetion is very vague. Each and every member from every State is going to ask questions. There are 18 Circles and 4 Metro Districts. Now you ask specific questions related to the main question, not of every State. Mr. Bhupinder Singh Mann.

**श्री भूपेन्द्र सिंह मान**: जितनी एसटीडी लगी हुई हैं, सभी एसटीडी ऑपरेट करने वाले कस्टमर्स से एक चार्ज लेते हैं, जिसको वे सर्विस चार्ज कहते हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या मंत्री जी को इसका पता है? कहीं तो एक रुपया लेते हैं, कहीं दो रुपया और कहीं ढाई तक भी लेते हैं।, वह रूल्स में नहीं है, वह ले नहीं सकते, लेकिन आम तौर पर लिया जाता है। तो क्या मंत्री जी इसके बारे में कुछ कहेंगे कि वे इसको बंद करेंगे क्योंकि यह लोगों के साथ धोखा है और धक्का है।

**श्री सुख राम**: मेडम, हमारी पालिसी में कोई सर्विस चार्ज हमने तय नहीं किया है, जो ले रहे होंगे वह अनअथोराइज्ड है। माननीय सदस्य जहां शिकायत करेंगे हम जरूर इन्क्वायरी करेंगे और जो भी एक्शन लिया जा सकता है, लिया जाएगा।

**श्री भूपेन्द्र सिंह मान**: इसकी कोई जांच.....

**उपसभापति**: बस, बस, बस। मिस्टर रफीक आलम। .. (व्यवधान).. बैठिए। उन्होंने जवाब दिया न। जांच कराएंगे तब जवाब देंगे, अभी उन्हें मालूम नहीं है।

**श्री रफीक आलम**: मैं एसटीडी क्या फंक्शन कर रही है, बताना चाहता हूं। किशन गंज में हमारे यहां एसटीडी तो लग गई है लेकिन कभी भी ठीक बात नहीं हो पाती है। तो मैंने लास्ट टाइम पूछा कि क्या वजह है कि एसटीडी तो लग गई है लेकिन बात नहीं हो पाती है? उन्होंने बताया कि टैक्नीशियन ही नहीं है। The man behind the machine is more important than the machine. तो मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि इसकी एफीशिएन्सी बढ़ाने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं? क्योंकि अगर एसटीडी फंक्शन नहीं करती है तो इससे गवर्नमेंट को लॉस होता है।

† [ ]

The man behind the machine is more important than the machine.

† [ ]

† [ ]Transliteration in Arabic Script.

**श्री सुख राम** : हो सकता है, मैडम, बहुत बड़ा नेटवर्क है सारे देश में, एशिया में सबसे बड़ा है और यह हो सकता है कि कहीं-कहीं शिकायतें हो और माननीय सदस्य की भी शिकायत अगर वाजिब होगी तो उसमें मैं कोशिश करूंगा कि अगर मैकेनिक नहीं है और इस वजह से यह ठीक तरह से नहीं चलती, तो मैकेनिक आपको देंगे ताकि जो एसटीडी की सुविधा आपको दी गई है, उसका फायदा आपको पहुंचे।

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Madam, from the statement it appears that there is no ratio between the population and the number of PCOs sanctioned. One reason that I find for less number of PCOs is the condition that the operators should have a meter. The meter costs Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 20,000. When the matter was raised earlier in this House, the then Minister promised that the banks would be asked to give them loan to purchase the meter because most of the people are handicapped or educated unemployed people. But it appears that it didn't work. Will the Minister consider prevailling upon the Finance Minister so that loans are given to these categories of people for the purchase of meters? It will be helpful to the operators as well as to the public because they will not be able to charge more.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Madam, this is part of our policy. According to our policy we want to give pay-phones to unemployed educated youths and poor unemployed educated youths. Keeping this fact in mind I have reduced the security amount from Rs. 9600 to Rs. 5000. They need not pay that amount. This amount can be deducted from the commission which they will charge. So, they have nothing to pay from their own pockets. We have also made it compulsory that the persons concerned should have call meters or charge indicators. It costs between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 25,000. We have made it clear in our policy that the concerned officer of the Department has to issue a certificate and on the basis of that certificate the person concerned will approach financial institutions for getting loan. It will be the duty of an officer of my Department to help that unemployed youth in getting loan. Madam, I have separately taken up this matter with all the State Governments. Since we are solving the unemployment problem of all the States, all the State Governments and local bodies should cooperate in giving sites for construction of telephone booths. Either they give us constructed booths on lease or rental basis or let the allottees construct booths because in big cities, like Bombay, poor persons cannot afford to pay *Pagadi* and all that. Therefore, I have taken up this matter with all the State Governments. I hope that they will all help us because we are helping them in solving the unemployment problem. As far as the financial problem is concerned, there will be no difficulty. Even a poor person will be able to get loan.

382. [*Transferred to 25th August, 1993*]

**Growth of Small Scale Industries**

@*383. SHRI NARAIN PRASAD GUPTA:†

SHRI SHIVCHARAN SINGH:

Will the MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the empty coffers of the State Financial Corporations (SFCs) have stalled the growth of Small Scale Industries (SSIs) in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that of nearly 9,000 Small Scale Industry Units slated to have gone into production with financial aid from the State Financial Corporations by May end, barely 260 have gone on stream mainly because the concerned State Financial Corporations have not been releasing the loan instalments as per schedule; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken to protect the survival of such units?

---

@ Previously starred Question 223, transferred from 12th August, 1993.

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Narain Prasad Gupta.